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STARTING A SPEED SKATING CLUB

Information Package



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Starting a Speed Skating Club

Definition

A club, by definition, is an organized group of people working together for a common purpose.

Benefits

The benefits of forming a speed skating club include:

- Encouraging local ownership
- Providing an organized form of recreation at the community level
- Promoting the development of leadership
- Encouraging cooperation and teamwork
- Coordinating fundraising activities

The advantages of forming a non-profit club, registered as a company, include the following:

- Limiting the liability of members of various debts and obligations on which the club could be liable
- Provide organizations with a more permanent although individual members may change
- Incorporate the business and affairs of the organization
- Eligibility for financial assistance from funding agencies and governments

Initial Steps

1. Make sure there is a need for the sport club
2. Talk to members of the community, find out their interest and get their support to look at new and improved ways to organize the club.
3. Call a meeting to discuss the benefits of a sport club and to confirm who the interested community members are.
4. Get those interested members together for a working meeting to plan how to better improve the club in the community. If this is the first attempt to organize a club, ask and encourage them to sit on the executive. As the club develops, members can later be elected to the executive.
5. Draft some guidelines for the club that include:
 - a. Purpose
 - b. Goals
 - c. Structure
 - d. Responsibilities and authorities of the executive
 - e. Relationship of the club to local recreation committee
6. Host the first annual meeting, agree with the principle of forming a club and organize how you will operate. Invite resource people such as your recreation leader, and/or member from provincial/territorial sport organization, provincial/territorial sport federation and/or ministry.

Association Guidelines for Clubs

An association must operate under guidelines which are set up by the membership. These guidelines are commonly referred to as constitution and by-laws or terms of reference.

If the association receives funding, competes in a number of events, or controls a large amount of money, it should operate under a constitution and by-laws and incorporate under the Societies Act.

When registering with the Societies Act, you are protecting your board by limiting their liability. It is important to have a terms of reference or constitution and by-laws written down. This will formalize the association and the way it conducts business. Terms of reference can be changed and given more detail as the association grows and progresses.

Sample Goals and Objectives

In setting up a club it is important to create and list goals and objectives. Goals are general statements describing what you intend to do. Objectives are more specific and usually describe what needs to be done, how to measure completion and the completion date. Objectives provide the specific directions to make your goals a reality.

Goal 1: Increase the membership base in the community

Objectives

- 1.1 To register anyone interested in becoming a member
- 1.2 To inform the community about the program and its opportunities

Goal 2: Encourage and support community competitions

Objectives

- 2.1 To obtain and schedule facility time
- 2.2 To plan ahead for the programs, facilities and activities

Goal 3: Assist in the development and implementation of programs, services and resources

Objectives

- 3.1 To organize coaching, player development, and officiating clinics
- 3.2 To register with your provincial/territorial branch
- 3.3 To develop leadership by arranging training workshops, holding regular meetings, and conducting the affairs of the association
- 3.4 To prepare a budget that recommends how much money should be spent, ensuring it is spent the right way, and providing financial information to the membership

Procedures of the Association

Once the executive is in place and the association's decision-making structure has been adopted, the association will have to adopt and recognize some fundamental procedures it has to follow.

1. The president, vice-president, treasurer and secretary are elected from the membership, these positions (usually called executive positions) are generally held for a one- or two-

year term. Other board members can also be elected at any annual general meeting (AGM).

2. Identify the minimum number of members required to hold a board meeting. This is called a quorum and it generally requires a minimum of half of the executive.
3. An agenda should be prepared and sent to all board members prior to the meeting.
4. A schedule for regular meetings should be established. Generally, meetings are held once per month at regular intervals.
5. The minutes of each meeting should be kept together in a file and made available to the public.
6. All meetings should be announced, and the public encouraged to attend.

Agendas, Decision Making and Meetings

The following are key responsibilities of any member for an effective meeting:

1. Purpose – Know the purpose of the meeting so you can best contribute.
2. Preparation – Review the agenda, available background information, and become familiar with the issues.
3. Process – Follow the president’s lead, work through the agenda, and stay on topic.
4. Post Meeting – Ensure your action items are followed and that the work is completed in an agreed upon manner.

Decision Making

When the group is ready to make a decision on a particular topic, a vote is held. The vote can be done by a show of hands or by the following what are considered to be proper procedure.

President Command	Description of the Command
"Motion"	Idea or deviation put forth by a member
"Secunder"	A member who supports the member making the motion
"Any further discussion"	Comments for or against the motion
"Ready for the question"	Everybody gets ready to vote
Vote	Vote yes or no or abstain (non-vote)
Results of the vote	After counting hands, the decision is announced; the motion is carried or defeated
Next item on the agenda	The next topic or discussion part.

Club Organization & Structure

Once the club has been promoted and interested members identified, an organizing meeting should be called. This meeting will be primarily for appointing an interim executive and to determine the structure of the association. The establishment of an interim executive will ensure progress. Once the club is operational, an executive can be elected from the membership. If the club chooses to become incorporated as a society under the Societies Act, they are required to develop a constitution and by-laws for the club and follow all other requirements in the Act. A smaller organizing committee may instead wish to simply develop a terms of reference. Generally, the recreation leader or any other individual assuming the leadership role should act as the chairperson of the first organizing meeting. The key individual will also be responsible for preparing the initial agenda, and should include the general information about the club, its goals, the interim executive and the role and responsibilities of the executive positions. The initial structure of an executive commonly takes the following form:

President

- Act as chairperson of all club meeting
- Ensures all orders and resolutions of the executive are carried out
- Manages the officers of the club
- Is frequently one of the signing officers of the club
- Contacts/liases with P/TSO

Vice-President

- Performs duties and exercise the powers of the chairperson in his/her absence
- Performs various duties assigned by the president

Treasurer

- Has custody of all funds
- Maintains a simple ledger of all club revenues and expenditures
- Ensures finances are accounted for
- Co-signs all club cheques
- Assists in the preparation of the annual budget

Secretary

- Reads all required correspondence and writes required responses
- Notifies all members of meetings
- Records minutes and procedures of the club
- Keeps a file of all correspondence, minutes, and reports of the club (usually for a period of five years)

The recreation leader is available as a resource person while the local recreation committee can function as an advisory group.

Club Committees

Often the association will form committees from the volunteer membership to deal with specific areas related to the operation of the association. A committee allows members to concentrate on one specific task. The committees can be formed for a predetermined period of time or can be on-going each year with new members.

Committees are frequently responsible for:

- Fundraising
- Sponsorship
- Coaching
- Competitions
- Registration
- Officiating
- Awards

Fundraising Committee

Every association will require fund-raising, and because of the significant amount of time this task takes, it is usually accomplished by means of a committee. The committee should include the treasurer and a number of others. Some fund-raising considerations should include:

- The committee should involve itself with activities that are consistent with the image and desired objectives of the association and will raise the monies required. You could continue using traditional methods or try something original or something reliable with a new twist.
- The committee should make use of resource people in your community and in the region, experienced board people, finance officers and recreation leaders.

Sponsorship Committee

Frequently the fund-raising committee will assume this responsibility, but whatever the association decides, the following are some useful points to remember:

- Efforts should be geared toward sources that have a logical relation to the sport
- Make requests at a time when companies are reviewing their budgets or early in their fiscal year
- Avoid competition with your territorial/provincial sport organization's sponsors and encourage sponsorship of not only money, but of donations in kind, for instance: airline tickets, reduced rates of hotels, equipment, and uniforms
- Contact your local P/TSO for information on available funding

Registration Committee

This committee is made up of members who volunteer for a short period of time to assume responsibility for this task. Registration fees are set by the membership, and the collection done in a fashion the association sees fit. Common methods include:

- Advertising for mass registration on predetermined dates, places, and times
- Ensure that adequate notice is given to skaters and parents in order to enable them to come up with their fees

- Have each coach responsible for registering their skaters and collecting fees. Frequently, local groups will affiliate themselves with the provincial/territorial sport organization and include both local and provincial/territorial fees in one registration fee

Officiating/Discipline Committee

It is very important for an association to have a committee that deals with officiating and discipline. Officiating is often a thankless job, and it is important that officials be supported by dealing with discipline. The committee should have a very clear set of procedures for dealing with skater versus skater discipline problems that may arise. The committee also frequently involves itself in the training of officials through the provincial/territorial sport organizations. The officiating/discipline committee often includes:

- A discipline chair who has good organizational skills and is knowledgeable about the rules of the sport. Generally, this person is appointed
- A member of the executive should sit in on the discipline committee, as should the head official
- The president is frequently not on this committee so he/she can be available to deal with any possible appeals to the decision made by the committee

Nominations

An association needs to recruit new members to its board and ensure vacant positions are filled. A nominations committee is usually formed at an AGM and is given the responsibility to sign up those interested in running for a position at the next AGM. Members of the nomination committee should provide the association's organizational chart and job description to the interested new recruits. We recommend staggering your board positions, so they do not all come up for re-election at the same time.

Competitions

The tournament organization committee usually has a chairperson and a number of members who are assigned specific tasks that may include:

- Awards
- Minor Officials and Games Director
- Banquets
- Officials
- Concessions
- Pre/Post Event Ceremonies
- Finances
- Announcers
- Sponsorship
- Programs
- Draws/Registration
- Facilities/Equipment



Club Finances

Sport cannot operate without financial support. An effective community sport association will guarantee the delivery of its programs by ensuring the association's budget is accurate, the money is raised appropriately, and any shortfalls are addressed.

Financial Management

Financial management is a responsibility of all community sport associations. It means controlling and directing the associations' financial resources through:

- Budgeting
- Purchasing
- Accounting
- Reporting
- Fundraising

A budget is a monetary plan. It is a forecast of revenue and expense over a future period, usually one year. A community sport association should develop an annual budget for its members to review prior to the beginning of any fiscal year. The budget is usually developed by the president and treasurer. If your association is getting started and needs help, ask your sport branch for assistance.